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September 7, 1977

Dear Ms. Toepfer:

Thank you for your letter of August 28. I am very happy to accept your generous offer of information about human rights practices in Bolivia. Our experience with Amnesty International groups has been a very useful one; on the whole we find your reporting very accurate and very helpful for our understanding of human rights practices in many parts of the world.

At this stage of my work it is my practice to work directly with governments to make sure that they understand the commitment, seriousness and the nature of the United States human rights policy and our special concerns in each country. For that reason I rarely comment publicly on specific human rights practices in any country. Since policy as formulated by this Administration is quite new for many countries, I feel that it is vital for them to have an understanding of our intentions and goals and to give each country an opportunity to absorb the information and become responsive to it. Our objective is to improve the observation of human rights throughout the world so I am willing to sacrifice the news stories for some results. But that is the special niche of this office. The most effective human rights instrument is international opinion and pressure both quietly and in the public forum. Just now I'm trying to stay out of the

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public forum but I certainly am glad it is there;
there's no substitute for that work.

Thank you for writing. I look forward to
hearing from you in the future.

Sincerely,

Patricia M. Derian.
Assistant Secretary for
Human Rights and
Humanitarian Affairs